

# Middletown Commission on the Arts

October 26, 2011

## Present

Lea Tomaszewski  
David Davis  
Lee Godburn (chair)  
Cassandra Day (vice chair)  
Fran Ganguli  
Richard Kamins  
David Bauer (Council)  
Bob Santangelo (Council)

## Also Present

Stephan Allison, staff

## Absent

Barbara Arafah  
Chelsea Rak  
Jenny Hawkins Lecce (secretary)  
Joyce Kirkpatrick  
Charlotte McCoid

## Remarks from the Chair

Chair Lee Godburn announced Middletown-related arts events: Fundraiser for a health center in Tanzania, Africa, organized by Wendy Black-Nasta, founder of Artists for World Peace, AFWP on Broadway, Nov. 6; Wine tasting to benefit FUTURES Nov. 18 at Esca with Chris Nirschel of the Food Network.

## Call to order

Commission Chair Lee Godburn called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. at the Municipal Building, room 208, Middletown, CT.

**Public session:** Middletown High School student (Chris) attended as part of his American politics class.

## Minutes from September 28, 2011

Motion by David Bauer to accept, Richard Kamins seconded. Motion passes with one abstention, Fran Ganguli.

## Old Business

**Budget report:** no news

## Program update

- i) Art Stakeholders: Stephan said a few people have been added to the group.
- ii) Arts & Creative Industries: Stephan noted Creative Juice will meet Nov. 10 with a program on social media by Topher Polack.
- iii) Website, Arts2Go.org: Stephan noted he will meet Oct. 27 with the head of the city IT department to fix Saturday events not showing up on the weekly events view.

**Subcommittee Assignments:** Lee passed around a sheet for commissioners to sign up for subcommittee assignments.

**Grants Policy Review:** Stephan noted one addition; for-profits must be in continuous existence for three years. Commission approved unanimously.

**Other:** no news

## Committee Reports

### Public Art

- i) **Catalogue of Collection:** Stephan said Joyce is working on updating the catalog. Stacey Dyer of Triple Frog will be helping with graphic layout gratis. Lee reported the MCA could offer a small amount of money as a thank you; he said Joyce agreed.

- ii) **MCAAA (Pandolfe) and 2012:** The old MCAAA piece has been replaced with the new one. The Robin Price piece has come back. Public Works will be repainting the base of the display case prior to the returned piece being displayed.
- iii) **Display Area Dedication:** Stephan reported this will take place after painting is complete.

### **Planning and Projects**

- i) **Arts Walk:** Lee noted he's putting a meeting together for next year's event. He will be speaking with Bill Russo about the city's road project in the same area. David Bauer recommended the Arts Commission consider the upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Water Authority being set up in Middletown. His idea is to reintroduce the WPCA with public drinking fountains on Main Street as a way to tie in the city's culture visually. Lee noted the MCA's public art endowment could be used for such street art.
- ii) **Arts Advocacy Day (April 16-17, 2012) Award:** Lee will accept nominations from Commissioners. David Bauer made a motion authorizing the Chair to create a press release on behalf of the MCA asking the public for AAD suggestions.

### **Nominating Committee**

- i) **Commission Vacancy:** Richard Kamins has two names and has spoken to one individual who is very excited. He is accepting more suggestions.
- ii) **Review of Bylaws:** no news
- iii) **Student Representative:** Lea has an interested person from a private school. Chelsea will be at the next meeting. David Bauer noted he's unimpressed with how the ordinance is written and the pre-process for new student reps takes months. Bob suggested the student rep be picked in his/her junior year of high school in June. Lee noted he'd be happy to see reps from Xavier, Mercy and one or two from the private schools.

**Other (Publicity, Kids Arts, Archive Committees):** Stephan noted the Circus Kids Arts report is included in Commissioners' packets; he'd received the NEAR packet but has not reviewed it yet.

### **New Business**

#### **Grants Panel Recommendations**

Lea/Lee explained the following recommended grant amounts.

- i) Gallore Gallery, \$0, (asked for \$4,900). Lee said the project, 30 paintings from photographs of city landmarks and historic businesses didn't demonstrate enough community involvement; the panel suggested ways Gallore would tweak its project.
- ii) Aryn Kyer, \$2,500 (requested \$6,000). Lea noted this would be two workshops with motivational speaker Jef Johnson. Lee impressed by the project's team-building and community potential. Artist donated some seats. Kyer told Lee event would go on with \$2,500 grant.
- iii) Neighborhood Music School, \$0 (asked for \$7,500). Weekly Dancing for Joy class at senior center. Lee reported it was a worthwhile project for those with Parkinson's disease, but other organizations with more grant money like the Department of Public Health, drug companies, doctors' offices, would be a better donor fit.
- iv) Oddfellows Playhouse, \$2,500 (requested \$5,000). A Christmas Carol production in addition to its regular season.
- v) Wesleyan/Davison Arts Center, \$1,000 (asked for \$1,700). Lee noted the "Big Draw" is a national event on April 22 and the project has potential for a lot of community outreach and involving all ages.

Richard made a motion to accept all recommendations, Robert seconded. Motion passes with one abstention from David Bauer.

## **Miscellaneous**

**MCA Mail List-Revised:** Stephan noted corrections from last month to Commissioner list.

## **Reports**

- i) Art Farm (June 2011)
- ii) Kids Arts Circus Report (2011)

Stephan noted both reports are in Commissioners' packets for review and are interesting reading.

## **Other**

**Open Air Market Oct. 23.** Cassandra reported Stephan, she, Charlotte and Lea manned the MCA booth, which was visited by many attendees. Balloons with MCA name, address were very popular. Estimated several hundred stopped by.

Stephan noted Dic Wheeler's report on the MCA's recommendation and small grant for a peer advisor from the Shoreline Arts Alliance. Progress has been made and an advisor chosen.

Stephan offered tickets to Friday's Business to Business Chamber event. St. Clements Castle is offering Commissioners free admission to its Dec. 17 holiday party. Cassandra noted the Oct. 28 Halloween Haunted Bash at the Wadsworth Mansion.

David Bauer, noting his MCA seat may change due to upcoming municipal elections, advised Commissioners to seek outside stimulus from organizations whose presence in the city is long-term, such as the Inn at Middletown, Downtown Business District, Historical Society as advocates and helpful resources. Commissioners should consider speaking at Kiwanis, Elks and Rotary meetings. He noted the Middletown Housing Authority is getting larger.

Chris from MHS asked Commissioners to participate in a survey on how the city responded to Hurricane Irene. Bob noted the Office of Emergency Management did an outstanding job.

**Adjournment:** Richard Kamins made a motion to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.; David Bauer seconded. The Commission's next monthly meeting is Nov. 16.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cassandra Day, acting secretary